



**County of Sonoma
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES**

Rita Scardaci, PHN, MPH – Director
Ruth Lincoln, PHN, MA – Assistant Director

Public Health Division

Mary Maddux-González, MD, MPH
Health Officer & Division Director

Correction regarding whooping cough (pertussis) vaccination recommendations

Earlier this month, a letter that went home to parents regarding the current whooping cough epidemic in California incorrectly said that all children over age 7 should receive a pertussis booster. The letter should have said all children and adults aged 7-9 who are not already fully immunized need a booster dose and all children over age 10 and all adults who have not yet received Tdap, the whooping cough vaccine for adolescents and adults, also need booster doses.

Whooping cough is a serious disease that that can be life threatening to infants and others with immune disease or breathing problems. It is very contagious and is spread from person to person though coughing. Whooping cough is still on the rise in California and is at particularly high levels in Sonoma County, causing serious illness in adults and resulting in the hospitalizations of several infants. Several infants in other parts of California have died from whooping cough infection.

For more information, about whooping cough, please visit the Sonoma County Public Health website at www.sonoma-county.org or call the Public Health Information Line at (707) 565-4477. Information about whooping cough is also available at these additional sites:

California Department of Public Health- <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Pertussis.aspx>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention- <http://www.cdc.gov/features/pertussis/>

Please help us stop the spread of this life threatening disease and make sure everyone in your family is up to date on their whooping cough vaccines.

Thank you,

Mark Netherda, MD
Deputy Health Officer
County of Sonoma, Department of Health Services